spring. Bonaparte made every effort to communicate with Paris. Some of his frequent despatches certainly reached their destination; but, going by circuitous routes, they were belated. This very fact, however, went far in France to surround him with a halo of romance, and to glorify the legend, never eradicated from French imaginations, that the national arms had subjugated the land of the Pharaohs. As every day revealed the incapacity of the Directory in the face of an exasperated and united Europe, the fancied splendor of Bonaparte's feats neutralized any remnants of suspicion remaining in the minds of the people regarding their absent victor. The conquering republic was over the sea; it was a spurious one which had remained at home to be humiliated.

Disquieting rumors of Bonaparte's death, said to have been spread by English and Russian agents, were prevalent during a part of December; but while at their height they were allayed by the arrival, direct from the seat of war, of a budget dated October seventh. The condition of the colony was described in glowing terms, but the gist of the despatches was that the Spanish admiral must be goaded to activity, and that the fleet from Brest must be sent to cooperate with him in the Mediterranean, in order to restore the prestige of France in the East. As for the writer himself, he hoped, should war break out again in Europe, to return in the spring. Meantime, the Neapolitans were marching on Rome, a fact which inclined the vacillating and harassed directors to act on the suggestions of their real master, although they kept his recommendations secret.

It was, therefore, not entirely without a coordination of plans that the Army of Egypt, strengthened and refreshed, made ready to move in February. The Turks, under the viceroy, Achmet, styled Jezzar, the